

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 /066 W

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R 171545Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3700

INFO DIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ROME 15086

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT WILL NOT DEBATE PRESIDENT LEONE'S MESSAGE

REF: ROME 15040

1. THOUGH THE TWO CHAMBERS WILL NOT FORMALLY PRONOUNCE THEMSELVES ON THE MATTER UNTIL OCTOBER 22, PARLIAMENT WILL NOT DEBATE PRESIDENT LEONE'S CONTROVERSIAL MESSAGE ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE COUNTRY. IN THE END, ALL PARTIES, EXCEPT THE EXTREME RIGHT MSI-DN HAVE LINED UP AGAINST A DEBATE, EVEN WITHOUT A VOTE. IN THE WORDS OF SOCIALIST (PSI) PARLIAMENTARY LEADER MARIOTTI, WHOSE PARTY LED THE FIGHT, "A DEBATE ON THE PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENT WOULD BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL, AND A HARBINGER OF POLITICAL COMPLICATIONS."

2. COMMENT: FEAR OF "POLITICAL COMPLICATIONS" WAS UNDOUBTEDLY DETERMINING. MANY OBSERVERS HAD READ LEONE'S MESSAGE AS A HARSH JUDGEMENT ON THE GOVERNING RECORD OF THE CENTER-LEFT PARTIES. MOREOVER, NO PARTY, EXCEPT THOSE OF THE RIGHT, WISHED TO CONFRONT ISSUES LIKE THE CALL FOR LEGISLATION TO REGULATE STRIKES. FINALLY, FEAR OF ACCEPTING A PRECEDENT WHICH COULD INFRINGE ON PARLIAMENT'S (AND THEREFORE THE PARTIES') MONOPOLY OF POLITICAL POWER ALSO PLAYED A ROLE. THE CONSTITUTIONAL ARGUMENT WAS JURIDICAL PETTIFOGGERY: PRESIDENT LEONE'S MESSAGE COULD NOT BE DEBATED, BECAUSE THE HEAD OF STATE IS, CON-

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STITUTIONALLY, NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OFFICIAL ACTS (EX-

CEPT TREASON). VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES, POLITICAL SITUATION, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME15086
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750361-0861
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751042/aaaablmr.tel
Line Count: 62
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ROME 15040
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PARLIAMENT WILL NOT DEBATE PRESIDENT LEONE'S MESSAGE
TAGS: PINT, IT, (LEONE, GIOVANNI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006